

banks of Rock Creek, has grown from its simple beginnings into a model for other municipalities to emulate. Garrett Park is a town which has embraced modern technology and yet still maintained a strong association with its rich history.

When you ask the people of Garrett Park to describe themselves and their town, they usually speak of their "independence" and "civic duty". They have a great respect for their local government and strive to look after one another. Garrett Park's greatest attribute may be the sense of close-knit community, from which stems its national recognition.

Again, I congratulate Garrett Park on this milestone. It is an achievement that all America should look up to and honor.

TRIBUTE TO MR. WALTER HAMEL,
LAST SURVIVING WORLD WAR I
VETERAN OF HAVERILL, MASSA-
CHUSETTS

HON. JOHN F. TIERNEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute Mr. Walter Hamel, the last surviving World War I veteran in the City of Haverill, Massachusetts.

Mr. Walter Hamel is a true American patriot and war historian. Born 97 years ago, one of seven children, he enlisted in the war. Still underage at only 17 years old, Walter entered the service with the permission and blessing of his mother. During World War I, Walter was assigned to the U.S. Army Signal Corps in Hawaii. Not only did he gallantly serve in this post during World War I, his patriotism for the United States never waned. Upon his return, Mr. Hamel participated in many parades and walked from nursing home to nursing home to distribute flags on Veterans' Day. Last November, the Haverill Gazette, located in my district, profiled Mr. Hamel as "An Enduring Patriot" for his actions.

Indeed, Mr. Hamel is not only a source of inspiration to his friends and family, but also to us all. Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the accomplishments of Mr. Walter Hamel; his military service and civil pride are to be commended. I hope my colleagues will join with me today in wishing Mr. Walter Hamel the very best as he continues to inspire us all.

TRIBUTE TO EDWARD C. VALDEZ

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Edward C. Valdez for his commitment and dedication to the Hispanic community. Edward Valdez is a prominent attorney and was awarded the 1997 Latin American Businessman of the Year. His accomplishments with the Hispanic community are noteworthy and warrant recognition.

Born in Castroville, California, Valdez spent much of his childhood in the fields picking fruit and vegetables. Valdez did very well in school, but had the notion that college and

higher education was for non-Hispanics. He grew up in a community where people worked in the fields all of their lives and no one ever went to college. This discouragement caused him to join the Army instead of continuing on with school.

In the service, Valdez began to meet college graduates and realize that he could also go to college. In 1964, Valdez finished his military obligation and enrolled in junior college. His college studies and determination paid off in the late 1960s when AAA Insurance hired him as a claims adjuster. The company soon promoted Valdez to a job in Fresno, where he continued his education at California State University, Fresno. In 1969, he began law school and worked as a paralegal by day and studied by night.

After graduation, Valdez and several other lawyers formed a partnership that became well known for work with the under-served Valley populations and Hispanic leaders. When his partners left the firm to become judges, Valdez built his firm into a solo practice. He continued his motivation by providing help with several community service projects. Valdez supports the Central California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the positive effects it has on business in the Valley.

Valdez credits much of his success as a result of his education. I praise his emphasis in the importance of higher education. He encourages lifting Valley farm-labor populations into enterprises that bring jobs and money through higher education.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I pay tribute to Edward C. Valdez for his accomplishments and dedication to the Hispanic community. His passion for the legal profession and his encouragement for Hispanic youth is both refreshing and inspirational. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing Edward Valdez many more years of success.

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER RE-
PORTS RAMPANT LABOR ABUSES
IN U.S. COMMONWEALTH

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, the following article is the second of two that appeared in the February 9, 1998 Philadelphia Inquirer and describes the plights of tens of thousands of foreign workers who live and labor in one of our U.S. territories, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). This article, "For Workers, Island Jobs can be a Losing Proposition," describes the desperate situations of these workers once they arrive in the CNMI deeply in debt and prone to exploitation.

Every independent reporter who has traveled to the CNMI to investigate the working and living conditions of the tens of thousands of imported foreign workers there has found that the principles behind the labor and immigration situation in the CNMI are contrary to those defined by established ideals of American democracy. The CNMI economy is based on the exploitation of a large, disenfranchised, foreign population, and laws to protect these workers on U.S. soil are neither being adequately applied, nor enforced, and perpetrators of justice are not being punished.

The article describes fifty-five men from China who each paid \$7,000 to a Chinese recruiter for "transportation, passports, and the promise of construction jobs. Most had to borrow money from friends, family members or loan sharks." Once they arrived in the CNMI, these men found no jobs waiting. Although the men marched in protest to the offices of the U.S. Department of Labor, the federal government could not help them because the CNMI has sole authority over immigration policy and controlling recruiters.

A similar story is repeated for 134 men from Bangladesh who paid \$5,000 to recruiters for jobs that did not exist. In both cases, the recruiters responsible for bringing these men from China and Bangladesh to the CNMI have fled, while the men remain disenchanted, hungry and desperate for employment.

The article also details the story of one 22 year old Chinese worker who tells of being summoned four times by her garment factory supervisor in his attempts to pressure her into returning to China to have an abortion after she became pregnant. The worker refused to have an abortion and, after losing several days of work because of a pregnancy related illness, was fired. She is now jobless and fears deportation back to China, where she would likely be subjected to a late-term abortion because she is unmarried.

Nowhere else in America would these practices be allowed to continue. Congress must act to change this situation. I have introduced legislation, HR 1450—the "Insular Fair Wage and Human Rights Act" that would place the CNMI immigration system under federal law, bringing the CNMI into conformity with every other U.S. territory. Further, this legislation will incrementally increase the local minimum wage until it reaches the federal level, and provide that garments only be allowed to bear the "Made in USA" label if all federal laws were adhered to in the manufacture of the garment. Passage of this legislation would bring additional federal oversight to the policies practiced in this remote corner of America.

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer, Feb. 8, 1998]
FOR WORKERS, ISLAND JOBS CAN BE A LOSING
PROPOSITION

(By Jennifer Lin)

SAIPAN, NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.—They arrive on the red-eye flight from Hong Kong pulling little suitcases on wheels into the humid, predawn blackness. Poor, tired and hungry for work, these young men and women from China are hoping for a slice of the American Dream.

They have paid thousands of dollars to agents at home for jobs in clothing factories on this faraway island that few can find on a map. At the airport, they stand out from the Japanese tourists heading off to luxury hotels on blossom-scented beaches. They are whisked away by waiting van's to spartan barracks.

For many desperate Asians, dreams of working in America have turned into living nightmares in Saipan. Men from Bangladesh and China have turned over their life savings to middlemen for jobs that never materialize. Young women from the Philippines have come to work in bars and been forced into prostitution. Garment workers from China have found themselves toiling in sweatshops for employers who cheat them out of their wages or limit their freedom.

Chinese garment worker Tu Xiaomei, 22 and pregnant, is one of the many unlucky ones. She is broke, jobless, and fearful of being deported.